In honor of the late professor and renowned scholar Ian Barbour, who passed away in December 2013, the department hosted a special version of its endowed Barbour lecture. The event was held on May 14th and brought together five nationally renowned scholars who addressed questions about evolution, technology, and ethics. Each speaker addressed the ways Ian Barbour’s work influenced their scholarly field and shaped their research in environmental ethics, the impact of technology on human values, and evolution and faith.

The Ian G. Barbour Lectureship on Religion and Modernity was established by Carleton alumni and faculty in 2006. It was created to honor Professor Barbour’s commitment to understanding the relation between religion and science in the modern world, and to draw to campus on a regular basis scholars and thinkers whose work illuminates the implications of modern ideas and practices for religious people and contemporary society.

Participating panelists included: Philip Clayton, Ingraham Professor Theology, Claremont School of Theology, Celia Deane-Drummond, Professor of Theology, University of Notre Dame; Nancy Howell, Professor of Theology and Philosophy of Religion, St. Paul School of Theology; Ted Peters, Distinguished Research Professor of Systematic Theology, Graduate Theological Union (Berkeley) and Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, and Bob Russell, Founder, Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences (Berkeley), Ian G. Barbour Professor of Religion and Science, Graduate Theological Union (Berkeley).

Topics of discussion included the impact of Barbour’s work on feminist theology and environmental ethics, the importance of Barbour’s work for bringing religion and science in dialogue, the relation between humans and animals from an evolutionary perspective in terms of theological questions about the uniqueness of human beings, and Barbour’s use of process theology to understand ecological concerns and religious pluralism.
On May 8th, Carleton welcomed the esteemed scholar Wendy Doniger to campus for a talk on “Freedom of Speech in India, from the Vedas to the Present.” Doniger is the Mircea Eliade Distinguished Service Professor of the History of Religions at the University of Chicago Divinity School.

She earned her MA and her PhD from Harvard University and her Doctorate in Philosophy from Oxford University. Her research and teaching interests revolve around two basic areas, Hinduism and mythology. Her courses in mythology address them in cross-cultural expanses, such as death, dreams, evil, horses, sex and women; her courses in Hinduism cover a broad spectrum that, in addition to mythology, considers literature, law, gender and zoology.

Doniger addressed issues of censorship in India, particularly in light of Penguin India’s recent settlement to stop printing her book The Hindus: An Alternative History. Shortly after The Hindus hit the press, a leading member of the far-right organization Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) filed charges against Penguin, arguing that the book violated the Indian Penal Code, which forbids “deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage the feelings of any class” of citizens.

In February 2014, after fighting the lawsuit for four years, Penguin agreed to cease publishing the book, and to pulp it (though the latter did not happen, as people rushed out and bought up all of the copies from the bookstores). The decision triggered an outpouring of indignation in the U.S. and in India, where literally thousands of people have written articles and signed petitions against the publisher. Doniger’s lecture was well attended by students, faculty, staff and community members.

On April 23, 2014 the New York Times published an article titled “Film at 9/11 Museum Sets Off Clash Over Reference to Islam.” If you want to know why I am a religion major, you need to look no further. As the article explains, a panel of NYC interfaith religious leaders is denouncing a seven-minute film titled The Rise of Al-Qaeda for its sloppy terminology. They argue that it conflates “Muslim” with “Islamist” and “jihad,” failing to situate those terms in their particular contexts. The result, the panel argues, is the further perpetuation of fears and stereotypes about Muslims.

The museum – which has had to grapple with how to represent Islam since its inception – is standing behind the film. According to the film’s defenders, the film is trying to be as objective and truthful as possible. To not use the terms “Islamist” to describe Al-Qaeda would be a failure to tell the whole story.

It is this desire to know the “whole story” that is at the heart of why I study religion. A native of a small town just north of NYC, the rhetoric of “Muslim terrorists” was constantly in the background. When I came to Carleton, I knew I wanted to at least take a class on Islam in order to challenge the narratives I heard growing up. That one class quickly became many, and not just on Islam.

No number of religion classes will provide me with easy answers to the concerns of the interfaith panel, the museum, or their visitors; when I graduate, I am not given a wand or crystal ball. Studying religion does provide me with many different lenses through which I can look at the 9/11 museum controversy and other issues. For me at the heart of the study of religion is an attempt to understand how others see the world. And perhaps even more importantly, find ways of sharing that knowledge so that everyone is able to challenge stereotypes and assumptions and think critically about the issues that shape our world.
**ASUKA SANGO**

Asuka Sango, Assistant Professor of Religion, recently had her first book, *In the Halo of Golden Light: Imperial Authority and Buddhist Ritual in Heian Japan (796-1185)*, accepted for publication by the University of Hawaii Press. She is already working on her next book, a study of Buddhist debate rituals in Medieval Japan.

Sango teaches courses in East Asian religions ranging from Chinese and Japanese religions of courses in Buddhism and ecology and Zen and nationalism. Her teaching is informed by her deep and broad knowledge of the historical and social environments in which East Asian religious practice is situated, and exceptional competence in the relevant languages. Professor Sango has also maintained a very active research program while at Carleton, concentrating on Buddhist ritual in Medieval Japan. She was also recently awarded tenure by the Board of Trustees, effective September 1, 2014.

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**FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS**

**BARDWELL SMITH PRIZE FOR EXCELLENCE IN THE STUDY OF RELIGION**

*Sara Reena Klugman ‘14*

Established in 2006 on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Carleton’s religion department, this prize celebrates the leadership and career of Bardwell L. Smith, the John W. Nason Professor of Religion and Asian Studies, Emeritus, and is awarded by the religion department to students who exhibit a passion for the life of the mind, a willingness to take intellectual risks, and a desire to grow and change as young scholars.

**CARLETON SOCIAL JUSTICE INTERNSHIP**

*Kalena Margaret Miller ‘15*

I am interning with South Sound Outreach, an organization in Tacoma, WA that works with homeless communities in the Seattle/Tacoma area. I will be helping with marketing & outreach as well as providing assistance to individuals signing up for healthcare under the Affordable Care Act.

**DACIE MOSES AWARD**

*Isaama Marian Stoll ‘14*

**FOUR FRIENDS FELLOWSHIP**

*Evgonea (Gina) Kabasakalis ‘15*

**INDEPENDENT RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP**

*Samuel Mitchell Powell ‘15*

I am traveling to Japan and China to study tea and religion. I have always enjoyed a good cup of tea, but now I will seek the divine. Historically, China and Japan differ in the role that the tea ceremony has in culture and religion. I am curious to see the differences in the modern performance of the ritual and how this spills over into consumerism and nationalism. This will include formal visits to Zen and Lu Yu tea institutes and participation in more popular tea practices by accepting any cup of tea I come across in my travels.

**STIMSON PRIZE**

*Matthew Joseph Fitzgerald ‘14*

**YUEH-TOWNSEND ASIAN FELLOWSHIP**

*Izzy Zeitz-Moskin ‘15*

I will travel to Vang Vieng, Laos, in order to deepen my study of Hmong understandings of wellness and spirituality in relations to both agriculture and people’s daily lives. Hmong cosmology is distinctly connected to spirits in the natural world, and these spirits are connected to the “life-souls” that comprise a distinct concept of body. In attempting to get a more subjective experience of how this cosmology actually manifests in Hmong culture today, I will try to integrate into one community through organic farming and teaching English, while also trying to gain a better sense of whether or not the depictions of ethnography match lived experience.

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**PUBLICATION NEWS**

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**Pictured here at the Department Picnic are 9 of the 15 senior Religion students – from left to right:** Sara Klugman, Guthrie Cunningham, Isaama Stoll, Matthew Fitzgerald, Marcus Rider, Jillian Mattern, Kassie Maxeiner, Meg Holladay, and Kayla Jackson.
2014 RELIGION SENIOR COMPS PAPERS

**Alison Byrnes** – Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Vision for the Beloved Community: A Close Examination of the Shift from “Phase One” to “Phase Two”

**Josh Carson** – Jewish Identities in Motion: New Holocaust Remembrance Rituals in the United States

**Charlie Cross** – Will the Revolution be “Spiritual?” Occupy, Spirituality, and Social Change

**Guthrie Cunningham** – Vine Deloria on Indigenous Notions of Space and a Relational Universe

**Christian Edwards** – Beliefs and Culture: Clashing Definitions of Religion on the Supreme Court

**Matthew Fitzgerald** – Theology of the Mad Farmer: Stewardship in the Work and Life of Wendell Berry

***Meg Holladay*** – “God is Not a God of Confusion”: Language Comprehension and Experience of God at a Haitian Immigrant Baptist Church

**Kayla Jackson** – You Are What You Eat: Exploring the Construction of a Black Social Body through Elijah Muhammad’s Prescribed Rituals of Consumption

**Sara Klugman** – Summoning Sango: The Moving Body in Sango Spirit Possession

***Jillian Mattern*** – Mothers in Sin and Salvation: Examining Agency in Mizuko Kuyo and Women’s Use of Blood Bowl Sutra

***Kassie Maxeiner*** – Heirs of the Prophets: Knowledge and Authority in “Al-Jumuah” Magazine

**Marcus Rider** – An Ideal Order: Understanding Sayyid Qutb’s Definitions of the “Social” and “Social Justice” in Islam

**Schuyler Rowe** – Signs of Boundary, Signs of Change: Examining the Westhampton Beach Eruv

**Meera Sury** – Prescribing Pranayama: The Integration of an Indic Breath Practice into American Biomedicine

**Isaama Stoll** – Choosing Not to Be Chosen: Reconceptualizing Jewish Chosenness in Modernity

***Received distinction on senior comps***